

Project Managers' Advisory Group

MINUTES November 21, 2011

Attending:

(* = by phone)

Kathy Bromead	EPMO
Bob Giannuzzi	EPMO
Jesus Lopez*	EPMO
Valerie Maat*	EPMO
Charles Richards*	EPMO
Alisa Cutler*	EPMO
Gaye Mays*	EPMO
Mike Fenton	S&A, Office of the SCIO
Janet Stewart*	ITS
Patsy Thames*	ITS
Lucy Cornelius*	DPI
Vicky Kumar*	OSC
Dell Pinkston	DOA
Marci Keiser	DMH/CRH
Barbara Swartz*	DHHS DPH
Ellen Zimmerman*	DHHS DPH
Karen Guy*	DHHS DIRM
Sara Liles*	DMH/DD/SAS
Mark Massengill*	DHHS DMA
Lawrence Sanders*	Dept. of Commerce/DES

Bob Giannuzzi welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Bob solicited and received approval of the November minutes.

Jesus Lopez reported he had not heard of any new PMPs.

Mike Fenton, presented the new Hosting Exception process (file to be sent out with the minutes) to be followed. This was developed in accordance with House Bill 22. Kathy Bromead advised that the exception request may be made prior to or after Gate 1. Timely response to the request will facilitate writing an RFP.

Bob shared the following PDU opportunities available through PMI (since updated). As expected, there are no more NCPMI meetings scheduled until after the holidays. Bob again reminded the group that the various PMI Communities of Practice (PMI members must subscribe) offer several live and recorded free webinars.

Venue	Speaker	Date/Topic
General Membership		No more meetings scheduled this year

Public Sector LIG		No more meetings scheduled this year
PMO Committee		No more meetings scheduled this year
Leadership Committee		No more meetings scheduled this year
Information Systems Committee		No more meetings scheduled this year
Government CoP free webinar		<u>Nov. 23</u> (noon) Mind Map Your Project
Government CoP free webinar		<u>Nov. 29</u> (7:00 – 8:00 PM) Project Governance Policies Enhance PMO's Existence
Leadership in PM CoP free webinar	Mark Swiderski	<u>Nov. 29</u> (11:00 AM) Five Visible Signs Your Project Will Deliver Expected Results

The progress of the EPMO work groups was discussed next.

- **SDLC** to address integration of alternate SDLCs (e.g., Agile) into the current process/workflow. Per Gaye Mays, the group is still looking for a pilot project for the proposed Agile workflow.
- **Agency Procurement** to develop a common (within agency) procurement process. Kathy advised that the group has continued to work on the RFP process of evaluation planning and scoring, having finished the first four of the eight steps.
- **Business Case** to develop guidelines and provide training on justifying projects based on cost/benefits analysis. Bob reported that the cost/benefits template is done. And the group is refining the training presentation. Input from the volunteer testers has been invaluable.

Alisa Cutler reported on Methodology Task Group activity. The group has drafted a requirements gathering document to be sent out with the minutes for PMAG review, with feedback due back to Alisa by 12/12. Alisa asked for particular scrutiny of the instruction section clarifying definition of functional vs. nonfunctional business requirements.

Per Gaye Mays, this year's EPMO customer survey had 56 participants compared to 71 for the previous survey taken two years ago. Preliminary results are similar to last time. Gaye pointed out that 46% of the respondents reported Agile usage in their agencies.

Bob quickly ran through a presentation prepared by Dick McGee of the EPMO QA team on *Project Management for non-PMs* (to be sent out with the minutes). Attendees were asked to get back with Bob if they would like Dick to present it to their agency business personnel. Marci Keiser thought it would be good for staff at CRH, and would advise if she'd like to arrange a session.

There was no new news on the EPMO website. Kathy projected the next quarterly updates to some date in December.

Bob encouraged the group to volunteer to share best practices and lessons learned at this forum. Lessons learned from recently closed projects are highlighted below.

Meeting adjourned at 4:28 PM.

NEXT MEETING

Monday, December 19, 2011 at 3:30
333 Six Forks Road Conference Room 5 or (919) 981-5581

<https://its.ncgovconnect.com/r96139571/>

APPENDIX

Lessons Learned Documentation

Exhibit A

ITS – Exchange Service Improvement

Execution & Build Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Issue Management	We relied heavily on one storage engineer rather than the Operations team. There is a disconnect between the Engineering and Operations staff. There needs to be suitable knowledge transfer from Engineering to Operations. Engaging Storage service owner could have prevented delays in issue resolution.
2. Project Schedule / Milestones / Project Planning	On some occasions, the Exchange Service owner proposed aggressive schedules without consulting the team. The team needs to be consulted on project schedule.
3. Hosting Provider (setting up environments)	If the Team knows what is exactly offered in High/Medium/Low server configurations, the team can make an educated decision on the best server specification. Inconsistencies can be eliminated by an automated server build process.

Implementation Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Resource Management (internal & external resources)	We need to have management oversight and engage key team members throughout the process.
2. Vendor Management / Vendor Performance / Vendor	Qualified staff, both on management as well as technical side are key.

Deliverables	
3. Change Management / Change Request	No changes should be implemented until we have checklists and more than one review in place.
4. Production Readiness (software / hardware, process, personnel)	Big Bang approach needs to be planned well. Phased implementation is a better alternative.

Exhibit B

DOT - Spatial Data Viewer

1. Encourage consistent use of a simple project decision model

2. Implement a structured test and QA process

Ensure more formal testing and QA work on final product

Provide industry best practice of peer reviews

Sarah Wray will lead this team, with Elizabeth Roman and Mike Schoen supporting

Scope will include some configuration management discipline (version control)

We'll likely expand use of MANTIS to meet test and QA requirements

Test/QA implementation approach

Sub-team meeting scheduled for Monday 8/30 at 10:00 a.m. to develop draft test and QA process

Sub-team will follow-up with full team to gain input and consensus, and to refine process

Take action to implement

*Implement a process that balances the requirement for structured test and QA activities with need to remain agile and responsive; Emphasize **quality throughout** lifecycle (development to QA)*

3. Analyze, recommend and take action on potential risk areas for SDV

Performance: We initiated an SDV Performance Tiger Team, being led by Sean Tucker

Software Push Process: We'll do a post-mortem on the recent patchlink software push of SDV Pilot 1 to ready ourselves for production (250+ users). Will include desktop requirements to support AGX

Communications Campaign: Talked with SDV business owner (Alpesh Patel) about collaborating with communications team in DOT to support campaign

4. Work closely with ESRI to gain benefit for the SDV solution

Currently influencing enhancements to AGX as we pass along feedback and ideas from Pilot 1

Considering upgrading to AGX version 1500 for Pilot 2; working closely with ESRI to understand timing (*team input needed on pros vs. cons*)

Will be engaging ESRI to provide recommendations on optimizing AGX performance and other items (*September*)

In discussions with ESRI about having them build a custom base map for NCDOT

5. Hold SDV Pilot 2 working sessions to begin shaping the scope and key changes for Pilot 2

Current plan is to reuse the SDV Pilot Definition document as the definitive guide, with Sean Tucker again owning that doc

Let's discuss best approach to working sessions (who, how, when)

Opportunities

1. For future projects, more detailed planning at the outset should alleviate the *scramble drill* feel leading to SDV “go live”

- ☐ New project manager took over at end of Planning & Design Phase

- ☐ Team had to accelerate some tasks and crash the schedule to keep the all-important 2/28/11 “go live” date, which was accomplished

2. Due to the acceleration of the schedule, certain areas—O&M readiness, for example—were not as mature as desired

- ☐ Team is now shoring up O&M processes and have used this lesson learned to the benefit of subsequent projects

3. SDV Performance Tiger Team was a good idea, but did not result in providing desired benefit for the cost

- ☐ Team had challenges establishing a focus and approach to this effort

- ☐ No final summary was produced

4. Some of the “requirements” discussed at the outset of the project were never formalized, and had to be negotiated later in the project

- ☐ A more disciplined requirements collection and analysis practice, as well as full communication on these requirements, should be implemented for future projects

Strengths

1. Project team worked very cohesively down the stretch and delivered more benefit, for less money, than expected

- ☐ Hit the key “go live” date of 2/28/11

- ☐ The SDV project model—using sub-teams to divide the work share—proved to be a successful approach

- ☐ Communications sub-team provided a focused effort to keep users informed on the SDV deployment, user tips and training (artsy posters communicating SDV “go live” were very successful)

2. Though it started slowly, the SDV training program blossomed to meet the needs of users across NC

□ An estimated 350-400 personnel will be trained on SDV by the end of 2011

□ Training locations expanded to include Raleigh, Winston-Salem, Asheville, Albemarle, Edenton, Fayetteville, Carthage and Sylva

3. The decision to have 2 non-production pilots for SDV was invaluable in ensuring customer satisfaction at “go live”

□ Team collected and analyzed user feedback on the 2 pilots to continually enhance the utility and user-friendliness of the solution

□ Seeing the pilot versions of SDV instilled confidence in the user community and management that the solution would meet expectations

4. The decision to have an SDV “go live” party to officially launch the product turned out well received

□ Opportunity to recognize efforts of the team and set a new cultural standard at NCDOT for successful projects

Exhibit C

ITS - Mainframe Software Toolset Consolidation

Initiation Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Business Case / Project Charter	The cost of the total implementation should be accounted for when developing the benefits to ensure they are fully accurate. The customer hours required for implementation were not accounted for in this case.
2. Managing Customer Expectations	The sponsors did a good job of getting out to all the customer agencies to provide them information on the impending transition to CA tools. However, the CA team that performed this function was the selling team. No members of the project team participated and the expectations of the customers were not managed well, or even captured accurately enough in order to develop plans for future management. The project PM and the actual team should participate in these activities in order to prepare adequately for implementation.

Planning & Design Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Updated Business Case	Different elements were involved in different aspects of the development of the project early. This included the vendor's participation. The individual that developed the SOW was not involved in the other aspects. The SOW developed was not well reviewed. Because of this, the SOW did not reflect the actual requirements of the project. Missing were significant requirements for training and phased implementation at over 14 customer sites. Bring the PM into this process to ensure an adequate SOW review and final development.
2. Updated Budget	Because customer hours were not accounted for in the costing of the project, the budget had to be significantly changed.
3. Managing Customer Expectations	See initiation above. Customer planning sessions were required to completely reintegrate the expectations of customer agencies.
4. Staffing Plan	The PM was not brought into the project until well into the planning phase. With the gaps in planning, the unrealistic SOW, and the problems with customer expectations, significant replanning was required. Bring the PM into the project as early as possible.
5. Project Schedule / Milestones	A series of change requests were required for this project. An unrealistic SOW of

/ Project Planning	work and dramatically mistaken customer expectations caused re-planning at several phases of the project. Bringing the PM into the project earlier would have prevented this issue from recurring during the project.
--------------------	---

Execution & Build Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Managing Customer Expectations	See initiation above
2. Project Schedule / Milestones / Project Planning	See planning above
3. Vendor Management / Vendor Performance / Vendor Deliverables	Vendor performance and key deliverables were not reflected in the SOW. The scope of the vendor effort was at least 400% larger than the effort reflected in the SOW. The vendor management required was thus increased dramatically and required sensitive negotiations in order to implement each deliverable from the planning phase forward. Fortunately the vendor understood the problems with the SOW and was fully committed to successful completion of the project. Had this not been the case the project would have failed out of the gate.

Implementation Phase:

Topic	Lessons Learned
1. Production Readiness (software / hardware, process, personnel)	Thorough PM and vendor management brought the project in under the projected timeline. However, additional time was required to refine the software implementation, to include retaining one of the old vendor's products for a one year period. Always plan additional integration time for a software transition for mainframe software that affects more than a couple of agencies as each agency uses the toolsets differently and this causes refinements that should be accounted for in the planning timeline.
2. Training (user, admin, etc)	See customer expectations and SOW above. This kind of project is largely a training project requiring a broadly scoped plan to address over 14 agencies at locations around the state, conducting training in 28 different mainframe toolsets. This was not accounted for in the SOW or timeline planning.

Exhibit D

DOT - Asset Management System – Bridge Management Addition

1. This project was created on 2/18/2009, and started on 3/2/2009. It was originally planned to end on 4/1/2011, but was ultimately extended to 7/29/2011. The reason for the schedule extension was due to problems and delays in procuring the product & services of the Software Vendor. This strain on the procurement process was in turn forced by the strain on the State's economy and budget. In the foreseeable future, this strain will exist more often than not with similar results.
Lesson Learned: Project Managers would be well advised to add two to four months to even the most conservative procurement schedule. This recommendation reflects the perception that at any point in time the procurement process is either broken or in flux, or under severe restraints/constraints imposed by the Governor and/or the Agency, or subject to arbitrary professional whims within the Agency or ITS procurement offices.
2. Without a contract in place with the Software Vendor, detailed requirements and the milestones for meeting them cannot be planned or analyzed, and the valuation associated with related Deliverables cannot be quantified.

Lesson Learned: Try (if the PMO/EPMO will allow) to “float” all Phase schedules beginning with Planning & Design against the date upon which the Contract is awarded; i.e., use “delta” dates such as “Contract Award plus 45 days” rather than trying to nail these down to actual Calendar dates such as October 12th.

3. Once the Software Vendor Contract was finally awarded (seven months later than planned), the project was able to make up three of the delayed months by “encouraging” the Vendor to parallelize some of their activities.

Lesson Learned: If possible, do not require a “final” Vendor schedule in the RFQ/RFP response; instead, allow for manipulation of the Vendor’s schedule during the early phases of their work.

4. Minor differences in the Actual Hours/Dollars reported in PPM were brought about by an error in the formula PPM uses to determine Actuals: the formula used is: Total Actuals = SUM (all Phase Actuals) + Projected Closeout Phase Hours. As soon as Hours are planned by the Project Manager into the Closeout Phase, these planned hours will be counted by PPM as Actuals.

Lesson Learned: Do NOT plan Hours into the Closeout Phase until the final monthly report.

5. The original Project Manager left the State’s employ during the Planning & Design Phase of the Project (~12/20/2009). This required a doubling of effort by the Technical Lead to take over, replan, and achieve the administrative signoffs necessitated by various Agency and ITS protocols prior to the end of the P&D phase when the Budget was finalized. Not all projects would typically be in the same position to have a new Project Manager already available from within the Project Team’s ranks to step up and take over.

Lesson Learned: For “large” projects (>\$500K), plan to have a Deputy Project Manager on the Project Team from the onset of the project. (S)he should be familiar with all aspects of the project, including the Initiation Phase, and should be known to and trusted by the Business Sponsor.

6. Outyear expenditures related to Software Maintenance were negotiated in the form of a separate Maintenance Agreement early in the Project; these enabled a more accurate planning of Maintenance Costs and, to some degree, Benefits, and also assured a seamless transition into the maintenance mode once end-users were relying on a production environment.

Lesson Learned: Do not wait until post-Implementation Phase to negotiate any Third Party Vendor Maintenance Agreements.

Exhibit E

ITS - Voice Mail Replacement – Lease

What did we do well?	What could we have done differently?
1) Customer Communication: Jeff conducted weekly agency voicemail calls. During these calls agencies were able to ask questions regarding the voicemail conversion. Jeff created a frequently asked question document from these meetings and distributed them to the different agency contacts. 2) Project planning and committees meetings helped in the development and	1) During the RFP process the scope kept changing which caused a six month delay in the procurement process. 2) Bring Avaya AAM and MM experts in earlier to review the design 3) On a first released product(s) increase testing with the vendor. 4) Obtain customer references from Avaya who has similar product deployed to obtain their experiences

<p>deployment. The project team met weekly.</p> <p>3) We engaged the Avaya critical escalation team to address the issues. Conducted daily calls to keep the teams engaged during critical issues.</p> <p>4) We had a consistent Avaya resource team available to help address the issues.</p> <p>5) Training for provisioning was conducted by Phyllis</p> <p>6) Lisa Mazzola lead the AAM training. She was part of the critical escalation team.</p> <p>7) Avaya provided onsite vendor support.</p> <p>8) Overall robust architecture reduced costs and allows for growth and provides enhanced functionality</p>	<p>5) When the product deliverables (GA date) aren't met the implementation dates need to be delayed to accommodate appropriate time period of testing.</p> <p>6) Identify a dedicated team early in the project.</p> <p>7) Be more timely with responses (reports, when is the fix is going to be completed..etc)</p> <p>8) Conduct training to Operations on the system earlier in the project.</p> <p>9) Audio Codes should have been onsite earlier in the project</p>
---	--